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Before the
Arizona Corporation Commission
In the Rate case of

Far West Waster & Sewer

Docket # WS-03478A-12-0307

Joint Surrebuttal of
Robert Rist
Robert Gilkey
Barbara Gilkey

Arizona Comparation Commission DOCKETED

AFR 0 1 2013



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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Rist / Gilkey Surrebuttal Docket # WS-03478A-12-0307

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Palm Shadows

Q. Robert the company has stated that Robert Gilkey was way off on his statement that the pressure main from Palm Shadows has 86 PSI static pressure on it. Do you have any comments about this?

A. Yes I do, first and foremost, the 86 PSI number came from Far West's head operator, Isaac. But even with that it is not clear what point they are making except to make a statement that he is wrong. We have checked the numbers ourselves, using Google Earth elevation readings with the following findings. The elevation at Palm Shadows at the location of the lift station is 251 ft.. The elevation at Section 14 at about the location of headworks, is 373 ft.. The difference between these is 122 feet of head. One hundred twenty two feet of head converts to approximately 54 PSI at ground level where a gauge would be installed. However if a gauge were installed down at the pump level which is about 25 feet below ground level, the PSI would be around 63. Then when you add in 5 miles of pipe and numerous fittings, you add more feet of head in friction loss, so the dynamic head at the pump is probably near 100 PSI in order to move the sewage out the pipe at Section 14.

Q. So, Robert what is the point you are making?

A. Robert Gilkey was making a point that installing a pump station at Palm Shadows may not have been the best option, or the only option. As I pointed out in my testimony, it will cost around \$4000.00 per month just to pump the sewage to Section 14. A recent data request indicates that the power bills are lower, around \$2500.00 per month, which indicates that the pumps are not running fully loaded, and do not run 24 hours per day, probably shutting down late at night. Robert Gilkey pointed out the Company made no contact with the City of Yuma about taking the sewage from Palm Shadows. Far West has now said in response to Gilkey/Rist data request 9.7, they did have a meeting with the city administrator and several other people, but discussed taking sewage on a temporary basis. This was to cover the time until Palm Shadows was decommissioned. We were talking about approaching the City to take it on a permanent basis. This is entirely possible and is recommended by the "YUMA 208 PLAN". The Plan clearly provides for Inter-governmental Agreements, and that should have been

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- explored. Far West is a signator to the Yuma 208 plan but has not used it to the best advantage of the 1
- 2 residents. I don't believe that ADEQ engineers came up with the plan to construct the Force main.
- 3 ADEQ is not in a position to do this as it makes them liable for problems in the design. Rather Far
- West and Coriolis developed that plan and it was accepted by ADEQ. Spending in excess of 4
- 5 \$2,000,000.00 to construct the force main was money wasted when it should have been possible to
- negotiate an option. I have met with the City Administrator, Greg Wilkinson, and he has assured me 6
- 7 there were no talks to take the sewage on a permanent basis. See Attachment 1.
 - Q. In response to the Gilkey/Rist DR 9.8, Far West denies that Palm Shadows ever had a design flaw. How do you respond to this?
- 9

- A. I totally find this a false and ridiculous claim. The design of this plant completely depended on 10
- the ground being able to percolate the treated effluent. This would have required a certified 11
- 12 percolation test of the area where the ponds were to be constructed. ADEO requirements for installing
- 13 an on site septic tank requires a certified percolation test, surely a wastewater treatment plant would
- 14 need even a more stringent percolation test. I don't believe Far West can produce documentation of a
- 15 percolation test, nor can ADEQ. ADEQ did no more than accept Far West's engineering report, which
- was bogus. Test drilling after the problem became evident, showed that the plant is built on top of an 16
- impervious clay bed. Evidence of that can also be clearly seen by looking at the storm water detention 17
- basins inside of Vista Del Sol subdivision. The 2 basins closest to the plant take a couple of weeks to 18
- 19 percolate the water, while the basins further to the north percolate usually in 24 hours.
- 20 The following statement is taken from RUCO Closing Brief in Docket # WS-03478A-08-0608
- 21 "Cynthia Campbell, ADEQ's Water Quality Compliance Manager, testified and The Company
- 22 witnesses confirmed that the Company originally obtained a permit to operate
- 23 Palm Shadows with two evaporation and percolation ponds. However, the ponds were constructed on
- 24 non-percolating clay soils and did not percolate effluent as designed. Instead of addressing the design
- 25 flaw, the Company built five more unpermitted evaporation/percolation ponds at Palm Shadows.
- 26 Upon inspection, ADEQ mandated that the effluent be removed from Palm shadows because it was
 - stored in unpermitted ponds, and exceeded acceptable volume and nitrate levels."

Plant Tours 29

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Q. Robert, Far West was glad that you complemented them on Section 14 and two of the other sites, how do you feel about this?

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A. Well, while I was being honest about what I found at those sites, it appears I was somewhat fooled. On February 20th ACC commissioners came to Yuma for a public comment meeting, and it became very evident from the heated comments there is still a serious odor problem at the Marwood WWTP. This is a plant we were not offered to visit, along with 2 other plants that are scheduled for decommissioning. On February 21st I requested from Craig Marks to tour these plants. We were not taken on the tour till March 20th. In the meantime 2 locally sponsored Foothills public meetings were held to discuss issues in the Foothills, and again the odors from the Marwood area was the main topic, and people were extremely irate about nothing being done and their complaints not being heard. At the time of our tour at Marwood, the odor was not real strong but it was noticeable. It is reported by residents in the area that the problem is worst at night. The Gilkey's and I drove around the area after dark and found if the breeze is coming towards you, and past the plant it is very noticeable. On some occasions the odors are reported to be nearly nauseating. Andrew Capestro admitted on the tour that Marwood has been a problem for 20 years. This is a problem that should have been addressed by ADEQ, Far West, and Coriolis. One plant that I had experience with when I was working had aerobic digesters similar to what is at Marwood. Odor was an ongoing problem in that system, particularly in hot weather. I offered some operational suggestions which I felt were not well received. I suggested that they might try shortening the decant cycle a little at a time. The 2 hour decant period stresses the bacteria and some die off, causing an odor. This might not work, but doing nothing doesn't work either.

Do you think as many residents do, that application of sewage effluent on the golf course is contributing to the odor at Marwood?

A. If this effluent is not completely broken down, and digestion activity is still taking place it definitely can be a source of smell. If any of the sludge is applied there will strong odors for a long time. On the tour it was evident that there was standing water in low spots of the course. They looked black and brackish.

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29 30 Q. Far West has taken exception to your claim that they should be doing everything they can to reduce the number of submersible pump stations. They claim your suggestion of "Wet side/Dry side" pump station is flawed because the dry side is still a confined space. How do you respond?

A. Technically that is correct, however they are much different. One definition of a confined space, is a space which has only one entrance and exit, so the dry side is still a confined space. The difference is that this space is completely dry, with no direct contact with the sewage. The space would have installed ventilation which meets the requirements for complete change of air in the space. Some may require climbing down a ladder, but in the case of Section 14 where I made the argument that they missed a golden opportunity, they easily could have had a stairway with handrails. Also this type of confined space does not require issuing an entry permit each day. A general permit can be issued each month listing who is authorized to enter. All persons who enter must be trained in confined spaces, and at least one person must be trained as a "Competent Person". The fact that the pumps are mounted on guide rails, does not preclude the need to still enter the Wet Well to service the pumps. That is easily shown with the brand new pump station at Palm Shadows. Very shortly after it was put into commission, it failed and sheared the bolts on a discharge flange, which required a shutdown of the station, and entry of the wet well. Mr. Ray Jones makes a point that "Far West has the most developed and rigorous employee safety program he has seen at a wastewater utility." If that is the case, I maintain Mr. Jones should check some well run wastewater utilities. Far West did not improve their safety program until two people were killed in 2001, and should ask themselves why two H&S employees recently quit their jobs working at one of the golf courses because of many safety concerns. Also there was a recent death of an employee on a backhoe, on the golf course. Mr. Jones states that "submersible pumps require no maintenance and are on a rail system allowing removal and replacement from ground level." My question would be, why do you need a rail system if no maintenance is required, and why do we need to replace the submersible pump? Clearly maintenance is required, there is no piece of equipment that doesn't need maintenance. I will point out, as I did in my direct testimony, when maintenance is needed on a submersible motor, Far West employees are not qualified to do it. These are special explosion proof motors and must be worked on by specially certified workers. In contrast to what Mr. Jones says, a dry well system does allow easy entry to inspect and maintain the pumps and motors.

Palm Shadows/ Force Main failures

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- Q. In Gilkey/Rist DR 7.6 claims there have been no failures of Palm Shadows pump station or force main. Do you agree with that statement?
- 4 A. Absolutely not. As I mentioned above there was a failure shortly after commissioning of the station as reported by Craig Marks on 12/23/2011 Docket # WS-03478A-08-0454
- 6 "November 25,2011: The pumps for Palm Shadows force main jumped their railings, forcing shut
 7 down of force main and reuse of WWTP for two days, filing tanks again, but not the ponds. The pump
 8 specifications called for ½ inch bolts. Far West replaced the failed bolts with ¾ inch bolts."
- 9 A second failure occurred on May 17, 2012 when a "discharge pipe came off of an elbow" as reported in Gilkey 3rd data request "spillreportsfor2012.pdf".
 - Q. How do you respond to the explanation of hauling sewage from lift station 25?
 - A. Well, I have to accept the explanation given, however this is an unacceptable way to run a collection system. It should have already been addressed, and ADEQ should be requiring a solution immediately. This is one more situation that points to poor management.

Customer Service

- Q. In staff's direct testimony, Gerald Becker provided a list of complaints from 2010 through 2013. The list shows almost no complaints, and a few opposed to rate increases. It also shows all complaints are resolved and are closed. What is your reaction to that.
 - A. Well my reaction is that those reports are dead wrong. All Mr. Becker needs to do is come to a public meeting here in Yuma and he will get an ear full from the irate customers. A quick check of the Docket today will show numerous complaints, and they are not just about the rate increase. I submit there are several reasons that ACC doesn't have complaints documented. First people don't know how to complain to ACC. Second, calls to Far West get no action, people have complained about odors for so long with no results so they have given up. I can tell you, there have been some improvements in areas where money has been spent, but other areas are still very stinky. Calls about sewage spills do seem to get some action, however there are far too many spills for an area this size. This can be seen by looking at the answer to Gilkey/Rist Data Request 3.4 "spillreportsfor2012-far west.pdf".

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Q. On page 28 of staff direct testimony, Gerald Becker was asked if staff investigated and made a recommendation whether it is in the public interest to appoint an Interim Manager. Did they do this?

A. Yes they did the investigation. Staff recommended that no Interim Manager be appointed at this time. I disagree with this decision, and feel a Manager needs to be appointed as soon as possible, and before any decision is made on this rate case. Staff and intervenors do not have a true picture of the management of finances and never will until this is done. An example of keeping us in the dark, was the Scheckert Aquatic Center & RV park. The Center and park were not listed as an affiliate, when first asked for a list of affiliates. They then listed the Aquatic Center as being on the sewer, but no mention of the RV Park. A call to Yuma County showed that the RV Park was on a septic tank. A further data request asking to do a dye test to prove the connection to a septic tank, which resulted in the admission that the RV Park is connected to the sewer. However there has never been a sewer charge for these RV spaces. They claim they were confused about the zoning, and didn't understand that it was an RV Park. The same situation was present when we started investigating the commercial business accounts. Here again not all customers were being charged. We have also found the same thing true among residents in mobile home parks such as Rancho Rialto, where all resident are not being billed. This was brought out at the last rate case, and we still find it is still true.

Gilkey Surrebuttal

Management

Q. Robert Gilkey, what do you have to say about Mr. Jones' contention that Andrew Capestro is

a full-time contractor to Far West?

A. I doubt that is true. There are many related companies in which Mr. Capestro is involved. In the Gilkey/Rist DR 6.3 we asked about the legal notice filings reported in the Yuma Sun newspaper February 18, 19 and 20, 2013, showing Andrew Capestro as a 20% or greater owner in the following related companies:

1	Las Barrancas Golf Course Management		
2	LLC Hank's Market and Butcher Shop Management, LLC		
3	Foothills Mini Mart Management, LLC		
4	Part of the answer was the "LLC's were created to facilitate internal accounting for H&S Developers		
5	and are not related parties to Far West". That tells us Mr. Capestro is involved in management of not		
6	only Far West Water & Sewer, Inc., but H&S Developers and the aforementioned Management		
7	LLC's. His involvement in additional projects such as the development of El Rancho Encantado,		
8	which is owned by Paula Capestro, and other affiliated related entities, also leaves room to speculate		
9	as to the amount of time spent on these other projects and not on Far West issues.		
10	Q. So, what does this have to do with anything?		
11	A. It tells us, that Mr. Capestro is not a full time manager of the sewer division of Far West and		
12	because of all of the inherent problems discussed above by Mr. Rist, a full time, qualified and		
13	knowledgeable water/wastewater manager is needed. Another issue is Far West's disregard for and		
14	ignoring of statutes, rules, regulations, decisions and consent orders. The legal fees, court costs, travel		
15	costs, fines, penalties, lost employee productivity and other consequences of non-compliance have a		
16	direct financial effect on the stability of the company and are attributable to the poor management		
17	decisions made by Far West.		
18	Q. Mr. Jones has stated that "Far West has been struggling to meet its financial obligations for		
19	many years and it continues today to struggle to meet its financial obligations." What do you		
20	have to say about that statement?		
21	A. The company has been struggling to meet its financial obligations because of poor planning, poor		
22	management and the use of related companies for labor and supply sources (examples being no bid		
23	construction and maintenance contracts being awarded to H&S and purchasing chemicals, parts and		
24	tools from the Foothills Hardware & Lumber Store at full retail prices which is often considerably		

more expensive than competitors in the area). Poor planning and poor management go hand in hand

and include, but are not limited to, the lack of foresight involved in the charging of capacity/impact

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fees.

Accounting Irregularities Q. What do you have to say about the \$25,000.00 check dated July 22, 2009, written to H&S Developers labeled "Employee Expense" in the Cash Disbursements journal? A. The first answer given to the Gilkey/Rist DR 5.17 question asking for an explanation of the expense as written was "The 'Employee Expense' was for the transfer of funds to the employees' insurance fund for the payment of medical claims incurred by Far West employees". At a later date, that answer was changed to say "The Company's has further researched this payment to H&S Developers and concluded that its earlier response was in error. The payment was transferred and deposited into the H & S Developers, Inc. Employee Benefits bank account. This led the analyst to determine that the payment was for Far West Employee expenses. In reality, the payment was not for Far West employee expenses. Rather, the payment was instead a payment toward H&S Developers' vendor account with Far West. The payment was applied to the H&S open invoices shown on the schedule attached as Gilkey 8.1 H&S Payment Schedule.pdf. The schedule, titled "Check History" was printed directly from Far West's Quickbooks accounting records and is the transaction history for the 7/22/2009 ACH transfer of \$25,000 to H&S Developers, showing the H&S Developers invoices that this payment was applied against. The backup documentation for each of the invoices is attached as a pdf file with the invoice number as the filename. Also attached as Gilkey 8.1 H&S Payment Detail.pdf is a schedule describing the expenditure and indicating the rate making impact of the expenditure. As noted on the attached payment detail schedule and the Company's original response to Staff DR GB 2-1(3), this \$25,000 payment to H&S Developers made on 7/22/2009 has no ratemaking impact on the current case." The information furnished may have no ratemaking impact on the current case, but it shows how confusing and inconsistent the accounting methods used by Far West are. Q. In your Data Request 5.9 you asked about the \$12,500.00 discrepancy between the amount shown in Far West Water & Sewer, Inc. Sewer Division Cash Disbursements journal showing Andrew Capestro received \$167,000.00 and the 1099 reflecting \$154,500.00. What are your thoughts on this?

A. Again, we were given two different answers. First we were told Mr. Capestro was paid

\$167,000.00 for the year 2011 and the 1099 reflected \$154,500.00 because of the way Quickbooks

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1 compiles 1099's based upon what was paid and what was applied, adding "There were bills that had 2 been paid, but payments were not applied to those bills until 2012, after the 1099's had been 3 distributed". At a later date, we were given another answer saying "

"The Company has continued to research this issue and was able to fully reconcile the difference between the cash disbursement to Mr. Capestro of \$167,000.00 and the Form 1099 issued to Mr. Capestro in the amount of \$154,500.00 for the year 2011. The Company's research and reconciliation shows that, although \$167,000.00 was disbursed to Mr. Capestro, only \$154,500.00 was properly reportable on the Form 1099 issued to Mr. Capestro. The reported cash disbursements and the Form 1099 issued to Mr. Capestro are both correct and there is no unreconciled difference between the two.

The difference occurs because a cash disbursement was made to Mr. Capestro that is not reportable on the Form 1099 issued to Mr. Capestro. This is because \$12,500 in payments to Mr. Capestro were for repayment of a previous payment returned to the Company by Mr. Capestro.

More specifically, on October 17, 2011 the Company issued check number 38698 to Mr. Capestro in the amount of \$12,500 for services rendered. On October 18, 2011 the Company realized that it was short of funds to make payments to other vendors. Mr. Capestro wrote a personal check, number 0093, to the Company in the amount of \$12,500, effectively returning the October 17, 2011 payment (See Gilkey 5.9 Capestro Ck 0093.pdf). The Company issued check number 38754 on October 19, 2011 repaying Mr. Capestro for the \$12,500 in legal fees returned on October 18, 2011. This payment of \$12,500, repaying the previously returned payment, is not reportable on Form 1099.

Note: Check number 38754 was for \$15,000 repaying the returned \$12,500 payment and providing an additional \$2,500 toward outstanding invoices".

A copy of the check Mr. Capestro wrote was also included with the above explanation. It was clearly stated on the check that it was a loan. In that case, the \$15,000.00 repayment check written the very next day should have reflected that it included a repayment of a loan and not been expensed as another "Legal and Management Fee" item. I might add that the first \$12,500.00 check was written by Far West October 17, 2011, Mr. Capestro's check for the "loan" was written October 18, 2011, and the \$15,000.00 check repaying the loan and an additional \$2,500.00 toward outstanding invoices was written October 19, 2011.

Denial of Service

Q. At the February 20, 2013 public comment meeting held by the ACC Mr. Todd Jensen, the manager of Yuma Ventures RV Park, spoke about their failing septic system and the need to connect to the Far West sewer system. What was the result of the discussion with Far West?

A. Yuma Ventures offered to pay Far West a capacity fee of \$395, 000.00 plus constructing their own sewer extension lines and paying for engineering. They were also quoted a sewer fee of \$21.75 per

space for monthly fees for Park Models. To date, that service has been denied.

Q. Aren't park models charged \$5.44 per month in other R.V. parks?

A. Yes, they are. This is more proof of the inconsistency of the management decisions being made. It looks like once again, they are confused about what constitutes an RV park.

Fiduciary Needed

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- Q. Do you agree with Mr Jones rebuttal of our discussion regarding capacity fees?
- A. No, The capacity fees were determined based on Far West's own plant in service claims (past cost). The city of Yuma wastewater rate for county customers was quoted., so it would be fair to use City of Yuma capacity fees which are \$6,577 for residential connections. There does not appear to be a special lower rate for RV connections. The City is not a private corporation and does not have an investor equity component, and must adequately fund for future growth. Capacity fees recommended in Gilkey direct testimony are approximately 70% of City of Yuma projected future costs. This capacity fee would result in Far West having an equity component of approximately 30% in future expansion. This is far in excess of the 13.98% equity proposed by Mr. Jones page 15 of his direct testimony. A lower capacity fee would result in an even higher equity component. My proposed capacity fee structure supports commission expectations for a reasonable balance between developer contributions and utility investment. Previous Commission decision 69950 resulted in no capital contribution from Far West. There has been no accounting of capacity fees alleged to have been received by Far West. Capacity fees and main line extension agreement accounts should have been administered by a fiduciary. This would have prevented Far West from paying themselves at the expense of other contractors. See "Schedule of Activity for Far West Water & Sewer Main Line Extension Agreement (MXA)" replying to Staff data request GB 2-2 showing payments made and delinquencies. It is evident that most payments are going to Far West affiliates, hence the need for a fiduciary.

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- We recommend that:
 - a. all capacity fees alleged to have been collected be accounted for and turned over to a

1	fiduciary under direct supervision of the Commission.
2	b. all financial transactions with regard to main line extension agreements to be administered
3	by the aforementioned fiduciary.
4	c. NO connections be allowed or capacity fees be allowed to be paid without prior written
5	approval of the above fiduciary.
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7	Palm Shadows / Force Main
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9	Q. What is your response to Ray Jones' rebuttal of your discussion on Palm Shadows and the
10	associated force main?
11	A. Mr. Jones is wrong. My position that Palm Shadows was a failure from the start is supported by
12	the testimony of Coriolis's engineer Mr. Gary Lee, and Mr. Andrew Capestro in the previous rate case
13	WS-03478A-08-0608. Mr Capestro acknowledged Palm Shadows is the responsibility of Far West.
14	Palm Shadows was engineered by and built by Far West and/or it's affiliates. Moreover, the Palm
15	Shadows plant was constructed to serve the Vista Del Sol development, a related company. Palm
16	Shadows construction and the community it was constructed to support were choices made by the
17	affiliated companies for their sole gain. (1) See RUCO Reply Brief of Docket # WS-03478A-08-0608
18	for a full discussion with citations attached.
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20	Q. Mr. Jones claimed we speculated Far West did not have contact with the city of Yuma
21	regarding obtaining treatment services. Do you agree?
22	A. No, Mr. Jones offers no evidence to support his thesis. We have previously provided testimony
23	that Far West did not have formal or informal contact regarding Palm Shadows service area. See
24	both Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 with responses from the City of Yuma requesting records.
25	Q. Does this complete the surrebuttal of Robert Rist and Robert Gilkey
26	A. Yes.
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18	Copy mailed to:	Janice Alward, Chief Council			
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	Rist / Gilkey Surrebuttal Docket # WS-03478A-12-0307	Page number 14			

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Attachment 1 Rist / Gilkey Surrebuttal Docket # WS-03478A-12-0307 Page number 17

CITY ADMINISTRATION



One City Plaza Yuma, AZ 85364 928-373-5011 (phone) 928-373-5012 (fax)

March 22, 2013

Mr. Bob Rist 9593 E. 34th Place Yuma, AZ 85365

RE: Palms Shadows

Dear Mr. Rist:

Regarding your request for me to check into additional information pertaining to Far West and other alternatives, nothing was located.

After research for the Palms Shadows subdivision, I have discovered that Far West did not approach the City regarding other alternatives for the lift station or the treatment facility when it was in affect.

If you have additional questions or concerns, feel free to contact my office.

With Regards,

Greg Wilkinson City Administrator

City of Yuma, Arizona

Attachment 2

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS



Yuma public record(s), for: Review	name) hereby request the following City of	
Has Far West Water and Sewer or any of contact with the city of Yuma regarding area located within the city of Yuma? If yo response[s]?	f its representatives had formal or informal that portion of Far West SEWER service es, when? If yes, what was the city's	
STATEMENT	OF PURPOSE	
In accordance with the provision of Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 39-121.03, I state; That copies, printouts, or photographs of City records which have been requested will not be used for commercial purpose(s); or That copies, printouts, or photographs of City records which have been requested will be used for commercial purpose(s):		
1-29-2013 Signature and Date	928-345-2468 Phone Number bobchester2000@aol.com E-mail Address (optional)	
The following public records were supplied per th	nis request:	

Office of the City Clerk, One City Plazz, P.O. Box 13012, Yuma, AZ 85366-3012 PHONE (928) 373-5035 • FAX (928) 373-5036 • TTY (928) 373-5149

1	Original Message
2	From: Small, Jasmine - Administrative Assistant < <u>Jasmine.Small@YumaAz.gov</u> >
3	To: bobchester2000 < bobchester2000@aol.com >
4	Sent: Wed, Jan 30, 2013 5:20 pm
5	Subject: Request for Public Records
6	Mr. Gilkey,
7	Regarding your attached Request for Public Records, there are no public documents to fill this
8	request. At this time I will consider your request closed.
9	Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions or concerns.
10	Thank you,
11	<<1 29 13 Gilkey.pdf>>
12	Jasmine Small
13	Administrative Assistant
14	City of Yuma Clerk's Office
15	(928) 373-5035
16	jasmine.small@yumaaz.gov